Under Valley

#2 APRIL 2025

INTERVIEW WITH:

EMERSON LAURA PALMER

Feature of:

thread in

A WORD

Hello, welcome back, this is the second issue of Undervalley. This time we have two features: A full interview with EMERSON LAURA PALMER, and a visual highlight of THREAD IN, with photography by me. Jay from Thread In also helped me to interview ELP, which I am very grateful for because to be honest I think I'm a pretty bad interviewer on my own.

A little context on EMERSON LAURA PALMER: This band has been around for about two years now, and their impact on the New Paltz scene has been undeniably positive. At every gig they manage to foster a safe & uplifting environment for crowd & musicians alike, and play damn good music while they're at it. This trend continues in a basement called Nebraska, where ELP's frontman Owen puts together concerts on a regular basis. The music is tight, the vibes are good, its $7 at the door, and no gets hurt in the pit. In 2025 DIY music continues to thrive, and Owen is one of many putting in the hard work to keep it going.

This shit is so so so important. We are living in scary fucking times, and censorship is one of many tools fascists use to maintain power. We must maintain spaces for art to exist free from censorship, and this includes DIY venues.

Support your community. Don't talk to cops. Fight for/with those in need. Make zines, make music, make art, and never shut up about it.

-Miles

WHAT'S GOING ON?!
KLIC KLAK!

EMERSON *Laura* PALMER

Guests:
The four members of ELP!

Owen, guitar & singing

Ben, guitar

Matt, drums

&

Henry, bass

Interviewed by Miles & Jay on Feb. 19th 2025

Thank you to Thorn Cross, Alyssa Sciaronne, & Kacie Owen for many of the photos included within. Find them on Instagram:

@thorncross photography

@picsby.alyss

@kaciegotit

Miles: Who is Emerson Laura Palmer?

Owen: Four fucked up boys from the Hudson Valley. Emerson Laura Palmer started as me recording music in my apartment. At the time, I had written a bunch of songs and I was really influenced by the lo-fi movement in the 90s. I wanted to record something that was an artistic product in and of itself, but also a demo tape in hopes of finding a band. I posted it on the internet and put flyers around campus, and then these three lovely gentlemen responded. We started playing the songs together and Emerson Laura Palmer quickly became something so much more.

Miles: Where does the name come from?

Owen: Emerson Lake and Palmer is a prog rock band from the 70s, and Laura Palmer is the name of the central character in *Twin Peaks*, which is my favorite series of all time. So just combining two things I like. RIP David Lynch

Ben: It's a name that has a lot of confusion around it. There's not a lot of people who come up to me and are like: "yeah, I know exactly what your name means." And I actually like it, because people just don't know what Emerson Lake and Palmer is, or they don't know Twin Peaks, or they don't know either. It's really grown on me. It's just who we are.

Miles: EP! You just released *Summer's End.* What was it like recording this?

Owen: Shades of amazing and mishap is how I would describe it.

Ben: We recorded in a lot of different places. We used the studio that's in the Student Union Building. We recorded in Shepard Hall. Actually, it was in a recording class. Shout-out Roy Thompson.

Matt: It was definitely a learning experience. We played at the radio station in the SUB. We recorded vocals in the library, at the Hawk Studios station. It was a lot of different pieces, and it took some time too. It took over a year to get it all, start to finish. A lot of different mixes, different people contributing.

Henry: The biggest issue was probably managing who was running what.

That seemed to be an unforeseen issue. The recording process was pretty good. It was spread out though. We had Brandon recording us at some. It was just a lot of split up recording stuff, which kind of created some headaches, but it was definitely a good learning experience for the future.

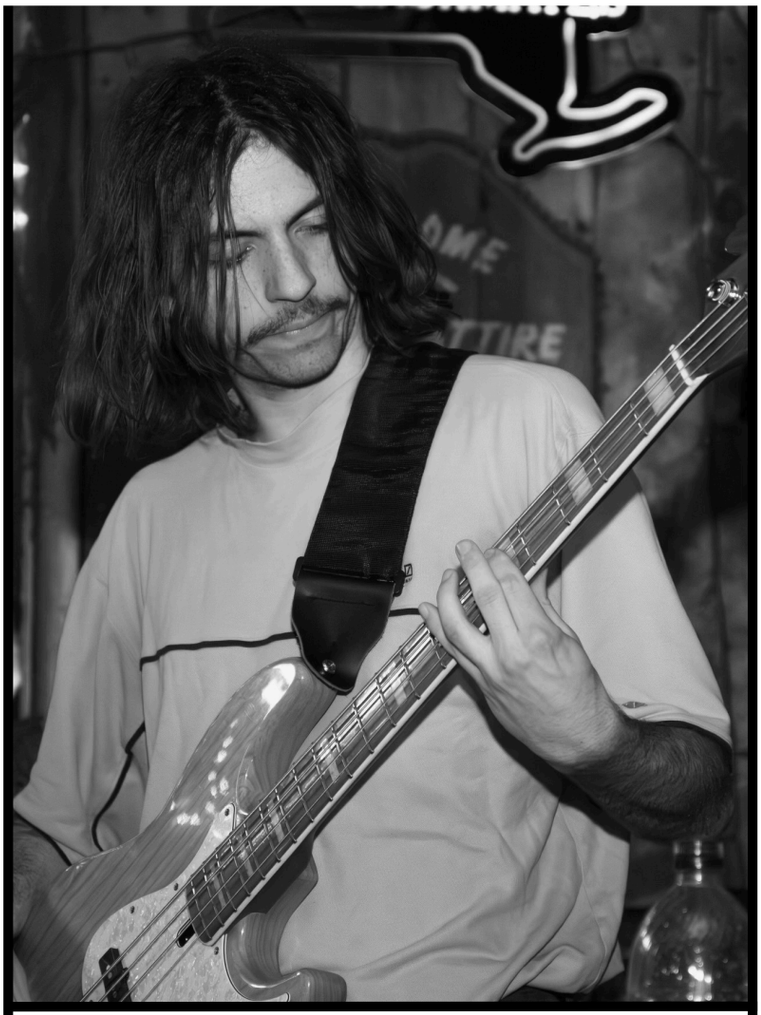
Miles: "Distant Stars", there's about three different recordings of it- a demo, the single, and then what ended up on the EP. What's the history of that song?

Owen: There's a version of that song on one of my demos that I put out on Bandcamp years ago. That version is very Yo La Tengo influenced, the guitar playing is very Ira Kaplan. We totally restructured it as a band, organically. We were practicing, and at one point we just started increasing the tempo as the song went on. And we were like, "we need to make that a part of the song now". A lot of our songs have come about that way, where we started from something very simple, and then we jam it out and it becomes something completely new through that process.

Ben: Almost every song that we play is something that you brought, And then we jam it out as a band and figure out new things. It's just been a really interesting way to create music, it's really fulfilling.

Miles: I wanna talk about "Rat Poison". I've heard that you're re-recording it for a split EP with 3Pigs?

Owen: Yeah... We could drop that. We are doing a split with 3Pigs, which has gotta be a crazy experience for Henry, because you're in both bands. The new "Rat Poison" came about organically. We did a very long recording session engineered by the lovely Brandon Pettenati from 3Pigs. We have this one new song that is five minutes long and it has so many moving parts, and we were really committed to recording everything live. I was really stressed out recording that song because getting every part perfect on a single take was really difficult. It must have been like an hour and a half, we kept



going through that song. And then at the end all the mics were still plugged in, we were kind of like: "Do you guys want to play Rat Poison?" The recording turned out really fun, so we're gonna put it on the split.

Ben: I already know it's gonna be a better recording than the first one. We recorded "Rat Poison" for the first time in the SUB. It was a very small room, it's so hot. I don't know how we crammed everybody in there.

Henry: The band Snooper, they released an album called Super Snooper, I believe. And on that album, there's a song called "Bed Bugs". We wanted to come up with shouting like in "Bed Bugs". It's surprising how loved it is. Everyone loves it, and it brings up the energy.

Ben: In Nebraska a few weeks ago, a girl came up to me and she was like, "I was the .001% listener of "Rat Poison" on your EP. I've listened to it 57 times." I was really impressed and I was flattered.

Miles: Speaking of Nebraska, Owen, that's your thing right?

Owen: Yes.

Miles: What's it like being a musician and a venue organizer in the same scene?

Owen: It's a difficult position to be in because of how advantageous it is. As someone who exists in a DIY scene, obviously I have the motivation to get my band booked, but I also want to make sure that the scene itself is fostered. So the question of "when do I book my own band?" is a little difficult. It almost feels embarrassing to book my own band at my own house. I try to get ELP in a couple of times a semester, maybe two out of four shows. I also try to make sure that all of the bands who are tied to the New Paltz campus specifically, that those people are able to play. It's really hard for those bands to get booked with the way the local music scene works. I do my best. I wouldn't be able to do it without my lovely, lovely housemates, especially when I'm playing a show. It's difficult, but I'm blessed to have the community that I do.

Miles: How do you find bands to book?

Owen: I have an awareness of what bands there are at a given time, and I try to think like: "Oh, I haven't seen this band play in a while, maybe I'll ask them." My personal taste does play a role in it, it's impossible for that not to be the case. I like to think that I'm aware of all the bands around that wanna get shows. Kill Your Darlings, a newer band, they got in touch with me and I was like "Okay, you are now in my mind, and I will try to get you in."

Jay: What is the origin behind the sample on "Summer's End?"

Matt: We were doing mixing right after we finished "Rat Poison", which had the old Raid commercial from the 60s. So on "Summer's End", I was like "We should have a back to school kind of theme", you know? So we were looking around, and we found this old commercial of Rodney

Dangerfield promoting his back to school movie. It was really a silly scene, but we thought it would fit well.

Miles: How was it playing at the Avalon Lounge, and how did that cassette tape end up in the Wallkill River?
Owen: I loved Avalon Lounge, and I loved Surgeon General. They are such a talented, amazing band, so it was an honor getting to share a stage with them. How did you guys feel about Avalon?

Ben: It was a cool place. I wish we could play there again. I remember their disco ball. But what happened to the cassette?

Owen: I brought a cassette player to the Avalon Lounge show kind of last minute. I'm a big internet bootleg archive guy, and I seek out recordings of shows from the 90s, early 2000s. A lot of those are on tape. And I was like "I want to make that for my band." The tape recording ended up so shitty, but in a cool way that I loved. I was gonna put it on Bandcamp as kind of a bonus thing, but then I got it in my head that I wanted to do a *House of Leaves* lost media exploration, where it was like some guy found the tape and it haunted his life. So I wrote a little short story to go along with it.

Miles: What is Science 1994?

Owen: It's a bootleg compilation of a band called Indian Summer. Fucking brilliant band. And I love the title so much that I decided to name my Bandcamp and YouTube accounts after it. This was pre- ELP being a band. I just wanted to reference something that I like. But then of course, everything ended up being released on those accounts, and now I'm like "oh, it's a record label!" It's not really a record label. It's just me being very nerdy about 90s emo music.

Miles: I've heard rumor -don't kill me- I've heard rumor that you guys already have a second EP in the works?

Owen: Yeah...

Matt: There is. Am I okay to spoil?

Owen: Yeah. Go for it.

Matt: There is a split EP in the works with ELP and 3Pigs.

Henry: And possibly beyond.

Matt: We have some other songs planned out, and a single that's almost finished that will be released soon.

Ben: I'd love to get one last thing with us before the semester ends, even if it's just a second EP or something like that. I feel like we still have a lot of creative juice to squeeze out of us. It's a good problem to have that so many people want to mix our stuff. I want to mix, Brandon wanted to mix, your friend wants to mix, my dad wants to mix.

Miles: So there is more new material in the works, beyond the split with 3Pigs?

Owen: Yeah.

Henry: First we're trying to get vocals on both sides. I know 3Pigs has both songs mixed, and Brandon is pretty quick with stuff so he'll probably get the other ELP ones done. Once we have vocals for both, then theoretically it can get released. Ben is doing art for the EP and that once we have that, it should be good.

Miles: Ben, did you also do the art for *Summer's End*?

Ben: That was a collective endeavor. We had a dollar vinyl that we got, we got a bunch of collage stuff. I had an old Time Magazine 'through the ages' picture book. So we cut it all out and we turned it into a little thing and we took a picture outside.

Miles: That's all of my questions, now is open ended. Talk about whatever you want.

Owen: Two closing things. #1: If you're a DIY person, and you're starting a band or a music project and you're wondering what it's like... It's an uphill battle in the beginning to get shows. For the first few months, for the first year, it's really difficult. #2: If you just go to the Internet and look up venues in your area or venues in a certain city, usually you'll be able to get a list of emails. And just send out super cordial business-like emails. Be like: "Hello! This is my band! This is what we sound like. We

would like to play a show at your venue." Treat it like LinkedIn or whatever. That's how we've gotten a lot of stuff to happen. And rest in peace David Lynch, again.

Ben: Owen, I appreciate you doing all the booking stuff. I can't imagine how crazy it is to deal with music weirdos and venues. You are our de facto leader and you figure out all of this really confusing stuff that I would not be able to do. So I appreciate it. And I appreciate you guys. This has been a great two years. I always look forward to our stuff and it's really changed how I see music.

Matt: I'd say it's been a great experience. I was in a few bands before this around New Paltz. Those were great experiences too, but I joined this band, and everything's felt very organic, and fun, and not a lot of pressure.

Henry: I don't know where I would have been without this band. It was my first year playing and I was kind of scared when I went to that first group meeting we had, the jam outside the lecture center. And it all turned out well. Like Matt said, it just felt right. Everyone is so nice, and it just creates a great environment to make music.

Owen: That first outside practice, I think I still have a voice memo somewhere of us playing "Disorder". I remember listening back to that the first week after that practice and being like "Holy shit! I'm in a band now." This has been my dream since I was 15, and it would not have happened without you guys. I love you guys. ELP would not be a thing without everything that you've contributed to the band and to my life.

Matt: Thank you to everyone who shows up to the shows. It's pretty crazy how we get to play at the tripping fields and send out a flyer like two days before, and people just show up. In the hot, in the cold. It's been a lot of fun, playing just to play.

Fin.

You can listen to Emerson Laura Palmer's latest releases SUMMER'S END and 3LP (w/ 3Pigs) wherever you find music.

Follow them @emerson_laura_palmer

ALBUM RECS FROM MILES

Ethereal Sea by Amanita

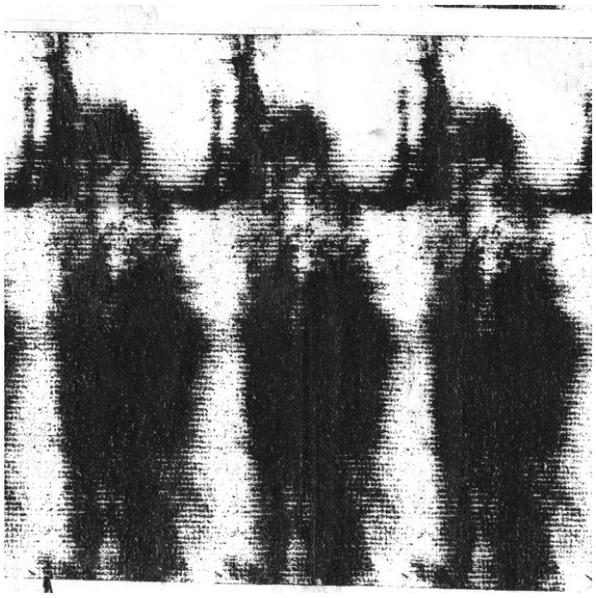
I don't remember the first time I heard this album, but in the last few years I've kept coming back to it.
A collection of six ambient tracks; a melancholic blend of synthesizers, piano, & oceanic soundscapes.

Bass Drum of Death by Bass Drum of Death

My friend Jack put me onto this one. A solid half hour of lo-fi rock, short and sweet and crunchy as hell. "I Wanna Be Forgotten" and "Crawling After You" were highlights for me, but really there are no weak tracks.

Juvenilia by Postcard Nowhere

I saw these guys play at a bar in New Brunswick, and they were so good I had to buy their CD. A bittersweet story told in punk & indie styles, ending with a nearly fourteen minute epic of a title track.

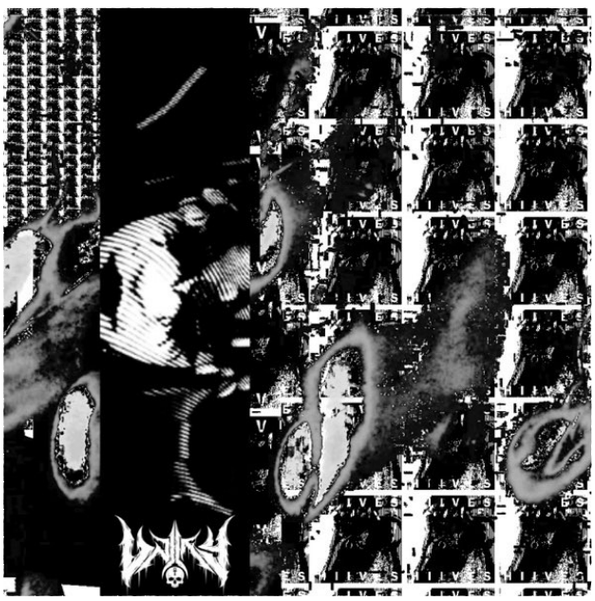


Ghost
by Tesa

This is one of the most psychedelic albums I've ever experienced. Entirely instrumental and face meltingly heavy, a blend of sludge & shoegaze that's probably best experienced under the influence.

Hiives
by Uniity

This is some insanity inducing electro-punk. Elements of heavy metal blended with glitch and breakcore sounds, bound together with a raw production style and a whole lot of emotions.



Entropy
by Pyrist

This album was made by one of my best friends. She describes it as "lo-fi house". but there is also a blend of psychedelia & ambient. It's breathtakingly epic and painfully personal at the same time.

Formatting is a bitch and I had a few extra pages to fill, so here are some albums I think are worth checking out. Most are from lesser known artists that probably deserve more attention.

HOLY FUCK! IT'S THREAD IN

new_paltz's: thread in, a slowcore etc. band infecting the youth, and the family dog. our feeble little journey of "thread in" began around january 2024, hoping to sound whatever color we could hear inside ourselves. we've been told that our music makes people dance, or cry, sometimes also at the same time, we just released our debut single and are working towards an album this summer. "hope to see u at a show soon! :)"

-thread in ♡

THREAD IN lighting up the stage

Center at West Park, 3.23.25

The debut single from Thread In, "Taint / Clothing" is out now!

Listen wherever you find music, or try to steal a CD from them after a show...

HOLIDAY

UNDERVALLEY #2 APRIL 2025 NEW PALTZ, NY

Interview with Emerson Laura Palmer inside!
Thank you to Owen, Ben, Matt, & Henry for agreeing to be interviewed. Thank you to Jay for everything.

Also thanks to West for the art below & on page 12, and to included photographers for letting me use their photos (info on page 3).